

REMARKS

Claims 1-5 and 8-42 are pending. Claims 1-5 and 8-42 are currently allowed. Claims 6-7 were previously canceled. Claims 26-42 are rejected. Specifically, Claims 26-28, 31-32, and 37-42 were rejected under U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,657,552 by Belski et al. (hereinafter "Belski") in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,731,223 by Partyka et al. (hereinafter "Partyka"); Claims 33-34 were rejected under U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Belski in view of Partyka and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 4,811,011 by Sollinger; and Claims 29-30 and 35-36 were rejected as being unpatentable over Belski in view of Partyka and further in view of U.S. Patent Publication No. 20020145568 by Winter. Although the Applicant respectfully disagrees for at least the reasons stated in the previous office action response, among others, Applicant has canceled Claims 26-42, without prejudice, and not to overcome prior art, in order to expedite issuance of a patent for all claims indicated by the Examiner as allowable, in favor of continued prosecution of the rejected claims in a continuation application to be filed under separate cover.

Applicant submits that these amendments herein are made without prejudice as to patentability, including the doctrine of equivalents, and not to overcome prior art, and that no new matter has been added. The Commissioner is authorized to charge any fees and to credit any refunds to the deposit account of Bracewell & Giuliani, LLP, deposit account no. 50-0259, attorney docket no. 027299.000002.

CONCLUSION

In view of the remarks set forth herein, Applicant respectfully submits that the application is in condition for allowance. Accordingly, issuance of a Notice of Allowance in due course is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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